



July 25, 2018

The Honorable John Barrasso
Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United State Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thomas Carper
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United State Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: AMERICA'S WATER INFRASTRUCTURE ACT OF 2018, SECTION 3203
SUPPORT

Dear Senator Barrasso and Senator Carper:

The Merced County Board of Supervisors would like to express its support for America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, specifically Sec. 3203, "Non-Federal Dams," of the Manager's Amendment.

This provision would authorize the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to accept funding from the owners of non-federal reservoir projects for costs associated with review and revision of USACE Water Control Manuals, including flood control diagrams, for non-federal projects regulated by the USACE.

It is crucial to note that the specific legislation cited (Sec. 3203) is narrowly focused on the owners of non-federal projects rather than authorizing acceptance by the USACE of funding for manual reviews from the broader "non-federal interests/entities."

This legislation is critically important to storage water enhancement in Merced County via one of its primary reservoirs, Lake McClure. A proposed project seeks to raise the spillways at Lake McClure and update the USACE flood control manual for the reservoir, taking into consideration new watershed data and science since the publishing of the original manual over 30 years ago. The intent is to raise the overall storage capacity of Lake McClure by 57,000 acre feet.

In order to initiate the project, this legislation would authorize the USACE to accept non-federal funding from the local project owner to update the USACE operating manual for the reservoir. This bi-partisan bill provides the USACE with the appropriate statutory authorization it needs to accept non-federal funding from owners of non-federal hydroelectric and dam facilities.

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With California's Central Valley increasingly suffering from either drought or flooding conditions, the Lake McClure storage enhancement project is a crucial step toward helping to alleviate both issues. Additionally, this project would go a long way toward benefitting not only agriculture, but also the local environment. It would replenish groundwater supplies and protect groundwater quality.

This legislative vehicle is what we need to help move this important project forward. The Merced County Board of Supervisors appreciates your efforts on this legislation and is fully supportive of America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, Sec. 3203 and this project.

Sincerely,



Jerry O'Banion, Chairman
Merced County Board of Supervisors

cc: *The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Member of the U.S. Senate*
The Honorable Kamala Harris, Member of the U.S. Senate
Hicham ElTal, Deputy General Manager, Merced Irrigation District